

# REPORT

## NATIVE PAPERS IN BENGAL

ON

FOR THE  
Week ending the 26th December 1903.

### CONTENTS.

	Page.		Page.
<b>I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.</b>		<b>(h)—General—</b>	
Erection of a British fort at Jashat in Persian Baluchistan ...	1087	The proposed dismemberment of Bengal ...	1095
The Shah of Persia's conduct towards Lord Curzon ...	ib.	A postal complaint ...	ib.
The Tibetan Commission... ..	ib.	The proposed transfer of Dacca and Mymensingh to Assam ...	1096
		The proposed division of the Mymensingh district ...	1097
		The proposed dismemberment of Bengal ...	1098
		The proposed transfer of some East Bengal districts to Assam ...	1099
<b>II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.</b>		Proposed reduction of the territorial jurisdiction of the Bengal Lieutenant-Governorship ...	ib.
<b>(a)—Police—</b>		The proposed dismemberment of Bengal ...	1101
A new grog-shop in Barisal town ...	1087	The proposed transfer of some East Bengal districts to Assam ...	ib.
Gambling in the Bhola mela in the Barisal district ...	ib.	Managership of the Tajhat Estate, Rangpur ...	1103
Oppression by a police constable in Dacca town ...	1088	The proposed dismemberment of Bengal ...	ib.
Prostitutes near a school at Kalighat ...	ib.	Government's partiality in the Bengal Secretariat ...	ib.
Publication of unauthorised newspapers ...	ib.	The proposed dismemberment of Bengal ...	1104
Oppressive officers of a zamindar in Uttarpara ...	ib.	The proposed pilgrim tax in Puri town ...	ib.
<b>(b)—Working of the Courts—</b>		The proposed transfer of Dacca and Mymensingh to Assam ...	1105
The second Munsif at Basirhat ...	1088	The proposed dismemberment of Bengal ...	ib.
The Subdivisional Officer of Nator ...	ib.	The proposed dismemberment of Bengal ...	1107
Mr. Weston, Chief Presidency Magistrate of Calcutta ...	ib.	The proposed dismemberment of Bengal ...	1108
<b>(c)—Jails—</b>		The proposed dismemberment of Bengal ...	ib.
The <i>Hitavadi</i> on its article entitled "Alleged <i>zulm</i> in the Dacca Central Jail" ...	1089		
<b>(d)—Education—</b>		<b>III.—LEGISLATION.</b>	
Superior claims of a Sub-Inspector of Schools overlooked ...	1089	The Universities Bill ...	1108
Rai Saheb Haran Chunder Rakshit as University examiner ...	ib.		
Grievances of Sub-Inspectors of Schools ...	ib.	<b>IV.—NATIVE STATES.</b>	
Mr. Pedler and the Sub-Inspectors of Schools ...	1091	Nil.	
The sale of school text-books at unauthorised prices ...	1092	<b>V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.</b>	
The appointment of Rai Saheb Haran Chunder Rakshit as an examiner ...	ib.	Nil.	
Babu Haran Chunder Rakshit as an Examiner in the Calcutta University ...	ib.	<b>VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.</b>	
<b>(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration—</b>		A book sold at the Sub-Registry Office of Tam-luk ...	1109
The motion of tram-cars ...	1092	Lord Amptill on the Hindu religion ...	ib.
The Khagra burning ghat, Berhampur ...	ib.	The surplus of the Birbhum Coronation Fund ...	ib.
A complaint against the Calcutta Municipality ...	1093	Lord Amptill on the religious education of Hindu youths ...	1110
The question of septic tanks ...	ib.	Lord Amptill on the religious education of Hindu youths ...	1111
Sir Andrew Fraser and the question of water-supply ...	ib.	The Budh-Gaya question ...	ib.
A ferry complaint ...	ib.	The Lieutenant-Governor's speech at Dacca ...	1112
<b>(f)—Questions affecting the land—</b>			
Nil.		<b>URIYA PAPERS.</b>	
<b>(g)—Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation—</b>		Indian Official Secrets Bill ...	1112
Oppression by mehters at the Howrah station ...	1094	Puri pilgrim tax ...	ib.
A railway complaints ...	ib.	Public health ...	ib.
An assistant station master beaten by a guard ...	ib.	Assessment of municipal tax by the Chairman of the Balasore Municipality ...	ib.
Railway complaints ...	ib.	Industrial Exhibition at Madras ...	ib.
A drainage complaint ...	1095	Oppression by the <i>arkatis</i> ...	ib.
		<b>ASSAM PAPERS.</b>	
		Nil.	



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## I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.

**THE Roznama-i-Mukaddas Hablul Mateen** [Calcutta] of the 14th December is sorry that the English Government is again trying to erect a fort at Jashat, the port of Persian Baluchistan. Some fifteen years ago some Englishmen, who lived there for trading purposes, were found intriguing with the *hakim* of that place, and the Persian Court, therefore, instantly dismissed the *hakim* and passed a strict order prohibiting such underhand affairs. The English are now demanding the right to erect a fort in that port, on the pretext of protecting the local Christian cemetery. It is to be seen what the Persian Court does.

**ROZNAMA-I-MUKADDAS HABLUL MATEEN.**  
Dec. 14th, 1903.

2. The **Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika** [Calcutta] of the 16th December writes :—  
The Shah of Persia's conduct towards Lord Curzon. We are sorry to learn that the Shah of Persia did not behave very well towards His Excellency the Viceroy. When Lord Curzon reached Bushire, no representative of the Shah came to receive him. It must be said that the Shah acted most improperly by frustrating the principal object of Lord Curzon, which was to win over His Majesty to the British cause.

**SRI SRI VISHNU PRIYA-O-ANANDA BAZAR PATRIKA.**  
Dec. 16th, 1903.

3. The **Bangavasi** [Calcutta] of the 19th December writes :—  
The Tibetan Commission. The primary object of the Tibetan Commission is said to be to establish commercial relations between India and Tibet. British merchants will reap all the advantages if the Commission be successful. But who will pay its cost? This question gives us the greatest anxiety. For the Indians to pay the cost and for the British merchants to gain all the advantages of the Commission, will certainly be a most unnatural arrangement. Lord Curzon, we think, will never allow such an injustice to take place. We have, however, other fears, and we therefore wish to see a speedy and peaceful end of this affair. If this affair proceeds to its bitter end, giving rise to bloodshed, then, indeed, the Llamas will be ruined, and the frightfully large bill of charges will make us bleed to death. Rai Sarat Chander Das, Bahadur, has suggested a very convenient commercial route through the eastern regions. But this project also will cost money, and money is the question of questions.

**BANGAVASI.**  
Dec. 19th, 1903.

## II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

## (a)—Police.

4. The **Barisal Hitaishi** [Barisal] of the 12th December complains that the opening of a new grog-shop in the midst of a respectable quarter in Barisal town has proved a great nuisance. Last year the authorities promised to remove it to a different quarter, but no such action has yet been taken in the matter. The grog-shop sells wine till after midnight, but no notice is taken of this illegality. Drunkenness is on the increase in the town. On 2nd December night, five drunkards kicked open the door of the Satyaprakas Press, and one of them was arrested by the town chaukidar and brought to the thana. Such rowdyism is of frequent occurrence in the town, but the police cannot arrest a single drunkard. The authorities should remove the grog-shop from its present site.

**BARISAL HITAIISHI.**  
Dec. 12th, 1903.

5. The same paper complains that at the *mēla* held every year at Bhola in the Barisal district, gambling prevails to an alarming extent. But the Subdivisional Officer and the police make no attempt to stop it. It is a fact that the expenses of the *jatras*, *nautches*, and numerous other amusements held in the *mēla* are principally derived from this source. The authorities will, it is to be hoped, prevent gambling in the *mēla* and thereby save the poor people of Bhola from ruin.

**BARISAL HITAIISHI.**



DACCA PRAKAS,  
Dec. 19th, 1903.

6. A correspondent writes to the *Dacca Prakas* [Dacca] of the 13th December that a certain police constable, with five companions, entered the shop of one Panchoo, a seller of cooked meat in Kabiraje's Lane in Dacca Town, and all the men partook of meat and other eatables there. When Panchoo demanded Rs. 2-1 as his charge for articles supplied by him, he was dragged to the thana by the constable and another person and there severely beaten. Panchoo then complained to the thana officers, who at first paid no attention to his complaint, but afterwards made the constable pay to Panchoo his due. The District Superintendent of Police, Dacca, should enquire into the matter.

PRATIJNA,  
Dec. 16th, 1903.

7. The *Pratijna* [Calcutta] of the 16th December complains that prostitutes have occupied houses near the Kalighat Vernacular School. The Police Commissioner of Calcutta will, it is hoped, pay an early visit to the place and remove the nuisance.

NAVA YUG,  
Dec. 19th, 1903.

8. The *Nava Yug* [Calcutta] of the 19th December draws the attention of the Commissioner of Police to the publication of several newspapers which are printed in the *Mistabhasi* Press of Bhowanipur, under different addresses, such as Khulna, Tamluk, Tollygunge, etc. These newspapers resemble the Calcutta papers in all respects. There appears to be something suspicious in connexion with these papers. A police enquiry will bring to light the whole mystery of the matter.

HOWRAH HITAIISHI,  
Dec. 19th, 1903.

9. The *Howrah Hitaishi* [Howrah] of the 19th December draws the attention of Babu Jyotsna Kumar Mukerji, a zamindar of Uttarpara, to the complaints against two of his amla, father and son, in the Khasbada mahal. They have been accused of extorting money from the raiyats and of committing various acts of oppression upon them. If these allegations be true, nothing can be more injurious to the good name of the zamindar.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

PRAJARANJAN,  
Dec. 14th, 1903.

10. The *Prajaranjan* [Tamluk] of the 14th December complains that Babu Amritlal Banerji, second Munsif of Basirhat in the 24-Parganas, holds his Court from 11 A.M. to 8 P.M. This causes very great inconvenience to the parties and their witnesses. It is to be hoped that the District Judge will take due notice of the matter.

HITAVADI,  
Dec. 18th, 1903.

11. A correspondent of the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 18th December says that in a bad-livelihood case before Babu Sasi Bhusan Basu, Subdivisional Officer of Nator in the Rajshahi district, about a hundred persons were cited as witnesses. The Magistrate ordered the witnesses to be present at the Lakshmanhati camp on the 28th November. The Deputy Magistrate, however, did not go to Lakshmanhati that day, and sent a constable to take recognisance from the witnesses for their appearance at Nator the next day. The witnesses complied with the order and attended Court at Nator at 10 A.M. on the following day. But the Deputy Magistrate did not come to Court till 4 P.M. He examined seven or eight witnesses and adjourned the case till the day following. On the following day also, the Deputy Magistrate came to Court in the afternoon and examined only three or four witnesses. The Musalman witnesses who were then observing their fast, being about to present a petition to the Deputy Magistrate drawing his attention to their hardships, the Deputy Magistrate lost his temper, haughtily remonstrated with them, and had a witness even pulled by the ear by an orderly. The officer ought to be brought to his senses.

NAVA YUG,  
Dec. 19th, 1903.

12. The *Nava Yug* [Calcutta] of the 19th December complains that Mr. Weston, the Chief Presidency Magistrate of Calcutta, has created alarm by the infliction of very severe punishments. He fined a hackney carriage driver Rs. 50 for rash driving. On Tuesday last he fined a coachman Rs. 100 for a similar offence. These fines, we presume, were paid by the owners of the carriages. How can the drivers, who earn only Rs. 7 or



Rs. 8 per month, he expected to pay such heavy fines? It seems Mr. Weston never in his past career as Magistrate met with this class of offenders, or he would have taken their pecuniary condition into consideration in inflicting fines upon them. The Presidency town is a different place from other places in Bengal, and this fact should not be lost sight of in awarding punishments.

## (c)—Jails.

13. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 18th December has the following:—

HITAVADI,  
Dec. 18th, 1903.

The *Hitavadi* on its article entitled "Alleged *zulm* in the Dacca Central Jail."

In the *Hitavadi* of the 4th *Agrahayan* was published, in the course of an article headed "*Zulm* in jail," a letter from Sri Kanai Lal Das De, a resident of Islampur in Dacca. In that letter the charge of oppression of the correspondent's brother was made against the Jail Doctor, Babu Ananda Chandra Ganguli. In publishing the letter we observed:—

"It is the duty of the authorities to make enquiries without delay as to how far all these statements are true. It is by no means the intention of the British Government that prisoners, as soon as they enter into the jail, should be subjected to all manner of maltreatment. It is therefore our belief that there will be no delay in making an enquiry for the purpose of ascertaining if there is any truth in these stories of oppression in the Dacca Jail."

We are glad to see that the authorities have made no delay in enquiring into this matter. They have informed us that no prisoner named Nimai Charan De came into the Dacca Jail during the month of September or October last. What is more, no prisoner bearing that name appeared in the Dacca Jail hospital during the whole of last year. Consequently the statement of the correspondent, Kanai Babu, is proved to be baseless. It is needless to say that it gives us great pleasure to find that the purity (spotlessness) of Doctor Ananda Babu's character has been established.

## (d)—Education.

14. The *Medini Bandhab* [Midnapore] of the 16th December complains

MEDINI BANDHAB  
Dec. 16th, 1903.

Superior claims of a Sub-Inspector of Schools overlooked.

that great injustice has been done to Babu Ram Gopal Mukerji, Sub-Inspector of Schools, Midnapore. Maulvi Tabrez Ali, Additional Deputy Inspector of Schools, Midnapore, having taken leave for six months, Babu Giris Chandra Som, Sub-Inspector of Schools in the Birbhum district, who was senior to Babu Ram Gopal, was appointed to officiate. In the meantime Babu Giris Chandra was appointed as permanent Deputy Inspector of Schools, Purnea. It was natural to expect that Babu Ram Gopal would now be appointed in the place of Giris Chandra Babu to officiate as Additional Deputy Inspector till the return of Maulvi Tabrez Ali from leave. But Maulvi Mahasin Ali, though a junior officer and in no way better qualified than Ram Gopal Babu, has been, for reasons best known to the authorities, appointed to officiate in the post. The attention of the Director of Public Instruction is drawn to the matter.

15. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 17th December is surprised that

SANJIVANI.  
Dec. 17th, 1903.

Rai Saheb Haran Chunder Rakshit as University examiner.

Mr. Pedler should have helped Rai Saheb Haran Chunder Rakshit to be appointed an examiner of original composition in Bengali in the F. A. examination. Mr. Pedler has, by his action, indicated from what class of persons examiners will be appointed in the reformed University.

16. The same paper writes as follows:—

SANJIVANI.

Grievances of Sub-Inspectors of Schools.

Last year Government made a grant of four lakhs of rupees to the District Boards for the improvement of primary education. Not content with this, Government promised a further grant of Rs. 56,700 for the purpose of appointing 63 additional Sub-Inspectors. This shows that Government places great reliance upon this class of officers in the matter of the improvement of primary education in Bengal.



There are three classes of Sub-Inspectors of Schools: First, those that were appointed before the introduction of local self-government, but were afterwards transferred to the Boards; secondly, those that are serving directly under Government in places where there are no District Boards, such as Calcutta, the Sonthal Parganas, etc.; thirdly, those that have been appointed by the Boards. The prospects of improvement of the first two classes depend upon the Director of Public Instruction; but there is no fixed rule for the improvement of Sub-Inspectors of the third class. The officers of this class are mostly graduates and many among them are Muhammadans. They have little or no prospects under the District Boards. If they have no prospects in the service, the cause of primary education in Bengal must suffer. Government knew this well and therefore made a provision for their improvement, but the injustice done to them by Mr. Pedler has deprived them of all hope.

On this subject the Government of Bengal, in its letter No. 2949 L.S.-G., dated the 24th July 1895, thus wrote to the Government of India:—

" Unless, however, these restrictions (that nobody should be allowed to enter public service beyond the age of 25 years) are generally modified, the choice of officers for Deputy Inspectorships will in future be limited to the Sub-Inspectors transferred to the Boards from Government service, and when in course of time that source of supply fails, to graduates who will never have served as Sub-Inspectors and necessarily be wanting in the special experience required to make an efficient Deputy Inspector.

"2. In order to get over this difficulty it is proposed that in the case of officers who have been appointed Sub-Inspectors by District Boards and have served continuously in that capacity, the fact that they have passed 25 years of age should be held to be no bar to their appointment as Deputy Inspectors."

The Bengal Government, in its letter No. 25L.S.-G., dated the 9th November 1895, then informed the District Boards that the Government of India had sanctioned the above proposal. Again, in its letter No. 516T.G., dated the 30th June 1897, Government said :—

"2. Of the transferred Sub-Inspectors, there are at present in the new Subordinate Service list:—

						Rs.
.	23	in class	V on	...	...	... 100
	21	"	VI on	...	...	... 75
	46	"	VII on	...	...	... 60
	29	"	VIII on	...	...	... 50
	<hr/>					
Total ...	119					

"The names of 25 of the most deserving of these officers should be printed in Roman type, so as to ensure their permanent inclusion in the list in accordance with Government order No. 1591, dated the 11th April 1896, and they should be distributed as follows:—

10 in class V.

10 in class VI.

5 in class VII.

"These officers will be eligible for promotion to the grade of Deputy Inspectors. The names of the remaining 94 officers should be printed in *italics*, they being regarded as seconded officers.

**Again :—**

"In the event, however, of the number of Board Sub-Inspectors in the Subordinate Educational Service falling below 25, promotions to it should be made from among the other Board Sub-Inspectors."

The two letters quoted above hold out to the Sub-Inspectors their only hope. The quarterly grade list published by the Director contains indeed the names of 25 deserving Sub-Inspectors printed in Roman type. In this respect at least Government's orders are faithfully carried out. But may we enquire—how many teachers, clerks, and Sub-Inspectors there are among the Deputy Inspectors appointed since the 30th June 1897? Unwilling to see graduates "wanting in the special experience required to make an efficient Deputy Inspector" appointed as Deputy Inspectors, Government made a distinct concession to the Board Sub-Inspectors not only "in order to get over this difficulty," but also to give to these officers the prospect of being promoted to Deputy Inspectorships. Are these orders of Government to be quietly ignored? We anticipate that, in reply to the above, Mr. Pedler may



refer to Government's letter No. 685, dated the 8th February 1901, which runs as follows:—

"A candidate for employment as Deputy Inspector of Schools should (besides possessing good educational qualifications and sufficient administrative abilities) be a successful teacher of at least three years' standing and prove to the satisfaction of the Inspector of Schools his possession of a competent knowledge of the art of teaching and of school management, and his capacity to inspect schools in the vernacular. He must also be of sufficient social status to command respect among all classes of people."

Here is an anomaly. In one place it is laid down that none but experienced Sub-Inspectors should be appointed as Deputy Inspector; in another, that no one will be appointed as Deputy Inspector without three years' experience as a teacher. Are we then to understand that three years' experience as a teacher is a better qualification for a Deputy Inspectorship than twenty years' experience as a Sub-Inspector? How ever that may be, is not Mr. Pedler guilty of the gravest injustice in appointing other officers than those whose names are printed in Roman type in the grade list, as Deputy Inspectors? If he had not passed over the claims of these Sub-Inspectors, many of these would have by this time been promoted to Deputy Inspectorships, and many among the Board Sub-Inspectors would have been promoted to higher grades. It cannot be the intention of Government to exclude deserving Sub-Inspectors from Deputy Inspectorships, nor do we object to the promotion of deserving teachers to those posts. What we object to is that in Mr. Pedler's time the promotion of teachers and sometimes of clerks in the Inspectors' offices to Deputy Inspectorships is the rule, and the promotion of Sub-Inspectors is an exception. In the quarterly grade list we find that 16 clerks draw salaries of more than Rs. 100 each, but there are only two graduates among them, the rest being in no way better qualified than the Sub-Inspectors. The length of service of eight of them ranges from 7 to 23 years, and some of them draw Rs 125 per month and the others Rs. 150 per month. But the salaries of 19 Sub-Inspectors, on the other hand, do not exceed Rs. 100, though their service ranges from 24 to 35 years. Are all these officers less qualified than the favoured clerks? If it was intended to show special favour to the clerks and teachers, they ought to have been included in a separate grade list from the very beginning. In that case there would not have been so much heart-burning among the Sub-Inspectors.

How cruel Mr. Pedler has been to the Sub-Inspectors will appear from the fact that in the scheme for the improvement of the Subordinate Educational Service, which was submitted by him last year to Government, recommending an increase in the number of officers in all the grades, he made no mention even of those Sub-Inspectors who have been transferred to the Boards from Government service. Far from giving an opportunity to the Board Sub-Inspectors to enter the grade list under Government, he excluded even the Government Sub-Inspectors from the scheme of improvement!

We shall mention yet another instance of Mr. Pedler's injustice to the Sub-Inspectors. Six teachers are sent to the Kurseong Training College every session for six months, and they are on their return appointed Deputy Inspectors as vacancies occur. But why are not some deserving Sub-Inspectors also sent there? Can it be denied that experienced Sub-Inspectors after being trained in the Kurseong College will prove much better Deputy Inspectors than the teachers?

We hope Lord Curzon and Sir Andrew Fraser will take due notice of what we have said.

17. A correspondent writes to the same paper as follows:—

Mr. Pedler and the Sub-Inspectors of Schools.

Two arguments have been brought forward by a teacher-correspondent of the *Sanjivani* as justifying the promotion to Deputy Inspectorships of certain teachers who returned from the Kurseong College after staying there for six months: First, that the teachers were specially qualified; secondly, that each of them suffered pecuniary loss to the extent of two to three hundred rupees by being obliged to remain at Kurseong on half-pay. This explanation serves only to show what injustice has been done to the Sub-Inspectors of Schools by Mr. Pedler. If deserving Sub-Inspectors had been asked to go to Kurseong on half-pay, would they have refused to go?

SANJIVANI,  
17th Dec. 1903.



As regards the promotion of Sub-Inspector Kiran Babu to the Deputy Inspectorship of Calcutta, it must be said that he is an exceptionally fortunate man. He was the last man in the 100-rupee grade, and yet he was promoted over the heads of 25 senior Sub-Inspectors. The teacher-correspondent says that Mr. Pedler promoted him because he was the best man in his grade. Were the four graduate Sub-Inspectors inferior to him in any respect, and were the 19 undergraduate Sub-Inspectors so very incompetent as to be unfit for a Deputy Inspectorship? We hope the attention of Sir Andrew Fraser will be drawn to these irregularities of Mr. Pedler.

NAVA YUG.  
Dec. 19th, 1903.

18. The *Nava Yug* [Calcutta] of the 19th December draws the attention of the Government to the sale of certain school text-books at prices in excess of those fixed by it. The reduced prices were notified in the *Calcutta Gazette*. The authors of those text-books wrote to the Director of Public Instruction and to the Bengal Government expressing their unwillingness to sell their books at the reduced prices, but no reply was given to them. The result has been that some authors have reduced the prices of their books, but others have not done so and are selling their books at the old prices. The price of the "Lower Reader," by Babu Chunder Nath Bose, M.A., the Bengali Translator to Government, was reduced from annas 4 to annas 3. Babu Chunder Nath is said to have made a representation to Government against this reduction of the price, but nothing came of it, and his book is being sold at annas 4 per copy. The History of India, by Mr. Abdul Karim, Inspector of Schools, is being sold at annas 6 instead of at annas 4 per copy, and Mahamahopadhyay Nilmani Mukerji's Middle Vernacular and Upper Primary Readers are being sold at increased prices. A text-book on General Geography, by Babu Sasibhusan Chatterji, was excluded from the list of approved text-books as being full of mistakes; but a bookseller has undertaken to save and has nearly succeeded in saving him from loss. These authors are gaining their selfish ends by throwing dust in the eyes of Government and the public.

RANGALAY,  
Dec. 20th, 1903.

19. The *Rangalay* [Calcutta] of the 20th December writes:—  
The *Sanjivani* says that by appointing Babu Haran Chunder Rakshit as an examiner of original composition in Bengali at the F. A. examination, Mr. Pedler has shown from what class of persons examiners in the future reformed University will be selected. We, however, do not think so. As Government has granted a title to Haran Babu, Government should devise means for his maintenance. We shall be happy indeed to see something put into Haran Babu's pocket by whatever means.

MISTABHASI,  
Dec. 22nd, 1903.

20. The *Mistabhasi* [Calcutta] of the 22nd December is very glad that Mr. Pedler has appointed Babu Haran Chunder Rakshit as an examiner of original composition in Bengali in the Calcutta University. The claims of a worthy man have been recognised.

(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.

BHARAT MITRA.  
Dec. 12th, 1903.

21. The *Bharat Mitra* [Calcutta] of the 12th December draws the attention of the municipal authorities to a letter published in the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* to the effect that the motion of tram-cars running along the Bentinck Street and the Chitpur Road, which are two very crowded streets in Calcutta, ought to be very slow and careful. The Belgachia cars in crossing the Chitpur bridge present a very fearful sight by coming into close contact with the shops on one side of the line.

MURSHIDABAD  
HITAISHI,  
Dec. 16th, 1903.

22. The *Murshidabad Hitaishi* [Murshidabad] of the 16th December draws the attention of the local municipal authorities to the inconveniences of those who happen to come to the Khagra burning ghat to burn the dead. There



is no tree nor house hard by where they can take shelter from the sun or rain. The municipal authorities should provide a corrugated-iron shed near the burning ground for the convenience of the public.

23. The *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 18th December says that about three months ago a dirty-water hydrant in College Street, Calcutta, went wrong and water flowed out of it incessantly. After some days the flow was stopped by plugging the hydrant. Since then the hydrant has remained unrepaired, and nearly 150 feet of the road in front of it has not been watered. There are nearly 30 shops and 200 inhabitants on the two sides of this part of the road. What have these men done that they and their shops should be allowed to be covered with dust for so long a time? Ought not the municipal authorities to be ashamed to realise their rates for this period? The shop-keepers petitioned the authorities in the matter, but to no effect. One gentleman has actually written two letters to the Municipality, but he has not been favoured with a reply. If a water-pipe in a rate-payer's house goes wrong he is fined if he does not get it repaired within 24 hours, but here a municipal hydrant has remained unrepaired for three months and no one has to say anything in the matter.

HITAVADI,  
Dec. 18th, 1903.

24. The *Basumati* [Calcutta] of the 19th December believes that the prevalence of fever in the villages of Shamnagar, Nawapara, Ichhapur, etc., is due principally to the introduction of septic tanks in those localities. Dr. Cook, the Health Officer of Calcutta, is of opinion that the water of septic tanks is injurious, and it was upon the expression of this opinion by him that the Municipal Commissioners of Calcutta in their tenth meeting in June last decided against the introduction of such tanks.

BASUMATI,  
Dec. 19th 1903.

There is another very strong argument against the proposed septic tanks. The Hindus will be greatly mortified if the contents of these tanks are allowed to flow into the river Bhagirathi, which is regarded by them as the most sacred in India. Government would be ill-advised in allowing Hindu religious feeling to be so grievously hurt. Though Government has not yet given its sanction, yet the owners of factories have been constructing septic tanks. This is very objectionable.

25. The *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 19th December writes as follows:—  
In the course of a speech which Sir Andrew Fraser made in Dacca town His Honour said:—"It is necessary, I think, for the people to remember that, in the matter of village water-supply, a great deal must be done by private liberality. This is one of those matters in which it is most reasonable to look to private benevolence for assistance in the work of the District Boards . . . I trust that when you have been asking me for money, you will excuse my turning the tables on you and asking you to spend some of your own money on the most important needs of yourself and your neighbours." We do not know what the Dacca people have said or have got to say in answer to this statement of His Honour; but it is certain that the statement has not given them satisfaction. When the road-cess was first imposed, it was stated that its proceeds would be applied to the work of water-supply and the construction of roads. The cess is being still realised, but where do its proceeds go? The Dacca people may fairly say that when the purposes for which the cess is realised are not practically carried out the cess should be abolished, and that when it is abolished they will spend their own money on water-supply. What have the authorities to say to this?

BANGAVASI,  
Dec. 19th, 1903.

26. The *Khulna Hitaishi* [Khulna] of the 21st December complains of the mismanagement of the ferry on the Darhatana river at a distance of half-a-mile from Bagerhat in the Khulna district. There is only one ferry boat both for crossing and recrossing and its *manji* lords it over all. People have often to wait on the banks of the river for hours together before they can induce the *manji* to take them over. All this causes great inconvenience to the public, and especially to litigants bound for Bagerhat. The attention of the District Board is drawn to the matter.

KHULNA HITAIISHI,  
Dec. 21st, 1903.



## (g)—Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.

SANJIVANI,  
Dec. 17th, 1903.

27. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 17th December complains that at the Howrah station all third-class passengers using the station privy are compelled to pay one pice each to the mehters, who derive a good income by this means. The attention of the railway authorities is drawn to this *sulm*.

SANJIVANI,

28. The same paper publishes the following from a correspondent:—

A railway complaint.

At the Nalhati station on the East Indian Railway there is a gate on the District Board road leading to the bazar, the Sub-Registry Office, the thana, the school, and other places. People going to these places must pass through this gate, which belongs to the Railway. Serious inconvenience to the public very often results owing to ballast trains and goods trains standing on the railway line and entirely blocking the gate. Sometimes carts, horses, and cattle have to wait for hours before they can pass through. No attention is paid to the public inconvenience, nor is any arrangement made to clear the way. As no light is kept near the gate at night, passage through the gate is extremely dangerous. The wire fencing near the gate is another inconvenience, for the wires are not smooth but full of sharp points. It is to be hoped the railway authorities will replace the fencing with smooth wire and arrange for a light at the gate at night.

HITAVADI,  
Dec. 18th, 1903.

29. A correspondent of the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 18th December says that on the night of the 28th November last, the assistant station-master of Bhedia within the jurisdiction of the Sahebganj district on the East Indian Railway was so severely beaten by the guard of the goods train, No. 56, that he had to be sent to the railway hospital at Rampur Hât for treatment. An enquiry was held into the matter by Mr. Lazon, Traffic Inspector, but it is feared that justice will not be done by him in the case.

HITAVADI,

30. The same paper has received the following railway complaints from correspondents:—

Railway complaints.

(1) Babu Satya Kinkar Basu, writing from No. 231, Alu Posta, Calcutta, says that five bags of potatoes were booked (F. No. 448) at the Patna station on the 18th November last, and in due time the receipt was presented at Howrah and a pass (pass No. 4646) was issued for the delivery of the goods. But as the bags of potatoes could not be found, the matter was brought to the notice of the Goods Superintendent. That officer, however, has up to this time made no reply. The value of the bags of potatoes was Rs. 42. Thefts like these go undetected, because the railway authorities do not exert themselves to trace them.

(2) Babu Phani Bhusan Mukherji, writing from Darbhanga, says that within the last four or five years Babu Sarada Prasad Banerji, *ghee* dealer of the place, has had about Rs. 600 worth of *ghee* abstracted from consignments to buyers despatched by rail, and not a cowrie of compensation has been given by the railways concerned. Recently Babu Bhupati Charan Mukherji, another *ghee* dealer of the place, consigned five canisters of *ghee* to Azimganj on the East Indian Railway. The consignee at Azimganj, however, received only four canisters, and the matter being represented to the Bengal North-Western Railway authorities, they replied that the consignment was delivered in full to the East Indian Railway at Mokameh Ghat. A representation was then made to the District Traffic Superintendent at Sahebganj, East Indian Railway, who, while undertaking an enquiry, refused to entertain any claim for compensation on the authority of the risk note in Form B. It is needless to say what result the enquiry has produced. But it is high time that the attention of the Government of India was directed to these frequent railway thefts, as the neglect of the railway authorities to bring the offenders to justice has set a premium on their boldness.

(3) Babu Sasanka Sekhar Misra, of Laha Raj Cutcherry, Jessore, complains of the inconvenience to which passengers are subjected at the Jessore station on the Bengal Central Railway in consequence of the irregularities and high-handedness of the employés. The correspondent could not catch the 1 A.M. train on the night of the 4th December last, because the employés, who rose from their sleep only a few minutes before the train steamed in, refused to book his luggage.



(4) A correspondent writing from Chandpur on the Assam-Bengal Railway draws attention to the harassment which is often caused to third-class passengers on this line, in consequence of the intermediate-class carriages being quite indistinguishable at night from third-class carriages. Mistake is quite unavoidable, as things now are, because intermediate class compartments are merely compartments of third-class carriages with only a different colour, the distinction of colour not being noticeable at night. The supply of drinking-water to passengers is also very unsatisfactory, and the food sold to native passengers by the vendors is very bad and unwholesome and is sold at very high prices.

(5) Babu Jyotish Chandra Sanyal, Mirtar Gullee, Dacca, complains that on the night of the 26th November he wanted to travel from Dacca to Kalir Bazar (Mymensingh). He saw some 250 to 300 passengers waiting for the train at the Dacca station. The train arrived, but it was full six or seven minutes before the booking-clerk opened the only one window of his stall. It is easier to conceive than to describe the crush that ensued among such a large crowd, every member of which was anxious to get his ticket as quickly as possible. In the hurry and bustle the booking-clerk almost invariably paid every ticket purchaser less than the balance due to him. The correspondent, who paid Rs. 2 for an inter-class return ticket from Dacca to Kalir Bazar, got back only 8 pice, though the balance due to him was 2 annas 9 pies.

31. A correspondent of the same paper says that Government constructed a sluice gate in the Suryyapur canal in the Diamond Harbour subdivision of the 24-Parganas district in order to facilitate the drainage of the villages Joynagar, Mograhat, Dhamua, Rangilabad, khas mahal Maheswara, Sitarampur, etc., and thereby protect the crops and the health of the villagers. The gate, unfortunately, has got jammed in sand, and the flood-water of the last rainy season having found no outlet, has seriously damaged the crops and caused outbreaks of malarial fever even in villages where it was quite unknown. The timely attention of the Subdivisional Officer, which was solicited by the villagers, to having the gate opened, would have prevented all this mischief. Government should take early steps to save the people.

ESTABLISHED  
18th Dec. 1903.

(h)—General.

32. Referring to the proposed transfer of the Chittagong Division and the Dacca and Mymensingh districts to Assam, the *Pratinidhi* [Comilla] of the 12th December writes as follows:—

PRATINIDHI,  
Dec. 12th, 1903.

From the tenor of Mr. Risley's letter we understand that it would be useless to oppose the proposal. But we ask, why has such a grave and important matter been decided in secret? The Chittagong people, of course, knew something, but the Dacca and Mymensingh people knew nothing of it. Government says that, however strongly the inhabitants of the districts which are proposed to be transferred may oppose the proposal, a day will come when, like the inhabitants of Sylhet and the talukdars of Oudh, they will understand that the transfer has really been beneficial to them. We know that Government will never give up the proposal in consequence of our opposing it. But how does it know that "the people of Chittagong themselves, who have previously been opposed to the transfer, . . . have changed their views?" Does Government mean to say that a few planter and official members of the Chittagong District Board have the right to speak for the whole Chittagong public? Have their words more weight in this matter than those of the Chittagong Association? The Chittagong people have not, as a matter of fact, changed their views on the subject.

33. The same paper complains of the incompetency of the post-master of Brahmanbaria in the Tippera district. He is aged and unpopular. The clerk attached to the office is a sloth, who does a minute's work in one hour. The signaller is the only competent man in the office. The attention of the authorities is drawn to the matter.

PRATINIDHI,



CHARU MIHIR.  
Dec. 15th, 1903.

34. Referring to the proposed transfer of the Chittagong Division and the Dacca and Mymensingh districts to Assam, the *Charu Mihir* [Mymensingh] of the 15th December writes as follows:—

So long men had been anxious only about the fate of Chittagong, and none of them knew that a sword was hanging by a thread over the heads of Dacca and Mymensingh also. Mr. Risley's letter has stunned the people of Dacca and Mymensingh. The proposal made by the Government of India has struck terror into their hearts. The shadow of an approaching calamity is visible on their faces. They have been caught by a greater panic than would be created by a bolt from the blue.

The arguments by which Mr. Risley has sought to justify the proposal are astonishing in their queerness. Government desires to define the western boundary of Assam by means of the Brahmaputra river. But where is the certainty that the Brahmaputra will for ever flow in its present channel? The past history of the river proves the unsoundness of Mr. Risley's argument on this point, and its present condition has convinced many people that the line of water, which has become an object of so much interest to the Government, will vanish ere long. The Brahmaputra cannot form the western boundary of Assam, because Dacca and Mymensingh are separated from that province by the Garo hills on the north and the Meghna on the west. What better boundary can Mr. Risley expect those districts to have?

As for Mr. Risley's remark that Dacca and Mymensingh are separated from Assam "by no ties of origin, language (or) religion," we are simply ashamed to offer a reply to it. Even schoolboys cannot help laughing at Mr. Risley's learning on this subject. As a matter of fact, Dacca and Mymensingh are not more like Assam than is Mr. Risley like an Armenian. In the letter under discussion we find Mr. Risley as the man who created a tumult in Bengal by raking up caste questions in the last census. The new tumult, however, exceeds the other in force and intensity. The second and third arguments used by Mr. Risley on the subject are being taken by many people in senses different from what they are intended by Government to bear. The transfer may benefit a handful of Civilians, but why should the inhabitants of the Dacca and Mymensingh districts make an enormous self-sacrifice for that? We seriously question the truth of the contention we see in the latter part of the third argument. Railways and steamers have made Dacca and Mymensingh not more than 24 hours' distant from Calcutta, as against 10 or 12 days from Shillong. The establishment of the seat of Government in any part of Chittagong or Assam will in no way be convenient to Dacca and Mymensingh, the roads therefrom to Chittagong and Assam being all difficult, expensive, and long. Besides this, every man, who has travelled to Chittagong, knows how fearfully malarious is that place.

It is proposed to transfer Chittagong Nagpur to the Central Provinces in spite of the extreme difficulty of communication between the two places, and yet difficulty of communication is cited as a reason for separating Dacca and Mymensingh from Bengal. Contradictory arguments of this nature are to be met with in every part of Mr. Risley's letter. We will not say much about Mr. Risley's fourth argument.

Nowhere in India is there a "close and intimate touch between the officers of Government and the people." There is therefore no ground for regretting its absence in Bengal. We do not hope that the proposed transfer of Dacca and Mymensingh will really have the effect of establishing a closer contact between the officers of Government and the people. If an Executive Council, like the Executive Councils which exist in Madras and Bombay, is formed in Bengal, it will lighten the heavy burden now resting upon the Lieutenant-Governor and preclude the necessity of dismembering the province.

Dacca and Mymensingh are the pioneers of education and culture in Bengal, and are connected with the other districts of the province by indissoluble ties of religion, language, and custom. And Government is anxious to break these ties. It is proposed to relieve the Central Provinces and Madras of the Uriya-speaking districts under their administration and "unite the whole of the Uriya-speaking peoples, both hill and plain, under one administration, and to make that administration Bengal;" and yet, strange to say, it is, in the



same breath, proposed to separate from the body of Bengal its two essential and inseparable parts, Dacca and Mymensingh. The proposed transfer of Dacca and Mymensingh to Assam will deprive them of a number of the rights and privileges they enjoy. They will lose the control of the Bengal Board of Revenue and their interest in the Bengal Legislative Council, and we do not know how long they will be allowed to enjoy the protection of the High Court of Calcutta. In dealing with the question of transferring Dacca and Mymensingh to Assam, Mr. Risley has neglected those very arguments on which he has sought to support the proposed addition of certain districts to Bengal. The proposed transfer of Dacca and Mymensingh to Assam will dissatisfy the Assamese, retard the progress of the transferred districts, and weaken the rest of Bengal. The Lieutenant-Governor should consider whether all the Uriya-speaking peoples may not be placed under a Chief Commissioner instead of reducing Bengal by cutting off two of its strong and healthy limbs, Dacca and Mymensingh.

That Government's political eyes and ears are blind and deaf to the hopes and aspirations of the public, is clearly indicated in Mr. Risley's letter, in which it is said:—"No temporary opposition in the transferred towns or areas, no artificial agitation or interested outcry, should, in their opinion, be permitted to divert the efforts of Government from the main object, viz., the erection of Assam into a vigorous and self-contained administration, etc., etc." Berar has been annexed in defiance of public opinion, and the public do not entertain the hope that Government will give up the idea of transferring Chittagong, Dacca, and Mymensingh to Assam. Within the last half-a-century the population of India has vastly increased, many kingdoms have been annexed to British Hindustan, and the Vindhya Hills have ceased to divide the country effectively into two parts. And yet Lord Curzon has found time to tour in the Persian Gulf after visiting more than six hundred Feudatory States and travelling throughout the extensive regions from Cashmere to Cape Comorin, from Peshwar to Burma. But after the extension of railways to every part of Bengal the Lieutenant-Governor of the province finds it an unusually heavy task to supervise it. What shall we say of this?

The Government of India has invited the opinion of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal on the proposals contained in Mr. Risley's letter. We now fully understand that it was to shape the destinies of Orissa, Chutia Nagpur, Dacca, and Mymensingh that His Honour was in a hurry to visit those places. Politics follows statistics, but religion takes cognisance of men's sorrows and inconveniences. Sir Andrew Fraser did not visit Chittagong, most probably because the fate of that Division had been sealed. It is not only that the question of the dismemberment of Bengal is involved in the proposed changes, or rather revolution, but the proposals constitute an ordeal for His Honour. He is a man of piety and keen insight. The inhabitants of Dacca and Mymensingh are waiting with great interest and anxiety for an expression of his opinion on the subject. It pains us even to think that considerations of personal ease and comfort will have so much weight with him as to induce him to assent to the sacrifice of two advanced Bengal districts like Dacca and Mymensingh at the altar of Assam.

We have no right to remain quiet at this time. We ought to raise a violent agitation against Mr. Risley's proposals. Signs of a fierce and widespread agitation are already visible. Dacca and Mymensingh have joined hands in the matter, and waves of agitation are rising everywhere.

35. The same paper writes:—

The proposed division of the Mymensingh district.

The proposed division of Mymensingh into two districts is a very important question. On it will depend in a great measure the happiness and convenience of the Mymensingh people. But the most curious fact in this connection is that the authorities never consulted the people who are quite ignorant of its intention. It is a mystery to us why Government is hiding everything concerning this matter in an impervious cover. Far more strange is the fact that even His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, when he lately came to this town, secretly conferred with the local authorities on this momentous subject.

We propose to offer a few remarks on the probable advantages or disadvantages that ought to be considered in this connection. In the first place, the

CHARU MINIR.  
Dec. 15th, 1903.



division that is contemplated will not make the two parts equal in area. The total area of Mymensingh is 6,000 square miles. The Tangail and Jamalpur subdivisions, which are to form one district, comprise 2,200 square miles, and the other district, to be made up of the Kishorganj and Netrakona subdivisions, will therefore contain 3,800 square miles. Moreover, the present town of Mymensingh, which is to be the head-quarters station of the latter district, will be situated in a corner. It is plain that the people of Kishorganj and Netrakona will not in any way be benefited by the formation of the eastern district, for the difficulties of journey to and from the town will remain the same as before.

Again, if Sarisabari or some place near it is made the head-quarters of the western district, consisting of the Tangail and Jamalpur subdivisions, neither of these will derive any special advantage. Jamalpur being connected with Mymensingh by railway, will lose rather than gain by the division; and the people of Tangail, if they can come to Sarisabari, will find little difficulty in coming to Mymensingh, because the Mymensingh-Jamalpur Railway line is not very far from Sarisabari.

Most of the Mymensingh zamindars will be greatly inconvenienced by the proposed division. Their zamindaris being situated in both districts, the cost of management will increase.

We hope Government will carefully consider all these points. If the inconvenience of the people and of the administration can be removed by a division, we will not object to it. But if the division be made only to lighten the pressure of work of the officials, a division should not be made. The money that will be spent in effecting the division may more profitably be utilized in extending the railway line to the subdivisional towns, thereby connecting them with Mymensingh. This will remove all the existing inconveniences and improve the inland trade in addition.

MEDINI BANDHAY,  
Dec. 16th, 1903.

36. The *Medini Bandhav* [Midnapore] of the 16th December contains the following imaginary conversation on the subject of the proposed dismemberment of Bengal:—

SCENE.—*The Council room at Simla.*

*Seated LORD CURZON and the LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR OF BENGAL.*

*Lieutenant-Governor.*—I have been appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal and I feel it a great honour. But I shall have to work very hard. I am advanced in years and a less laborious post would have suited me better, for without that one cannot expect to enjoy one's pension long after returning home. It was not given to Woodburn to return home. You are also aware of Mackenzie's fate.

*Lord Curzon.*—Why, you can do one thing. You can lay the whole burden of work on your Secretaries and live quite at your ease in Belvedere.

*Lieutenant-Governor.*—I can't do that. Like you, I too can't sign papers without looking into them.

*Lord Curzon.*—[*Reflecting awhile.*] Can we not, then, do one thing? It would be well to amalgamate Orissa with Madras. That will lessen your work.

*Lieutenant-Governor.*—No, no, you should not do that. The Uiyas are very meek creatures. They cannot say "bo" to a goose. If they ever become impertinent in imitation of the ways of Calcutta people, a rebuke is enough to set them right. I would much rather take upon myself the task of administering the portion of Orissa now included in Madras and the Central Provinces than part with the inhabitants of Balasore, Cuttack, and Puri. Poor, dear, meek, dumb creatures! They are very dear to me.

*Lord Curzon.*—Shall we then amalgamate Bihar with the North-Western Province?

*Lieutenant-Governor.*—I cannot also agree to that. The Biharis, too, are very good souls. They are not boisterous. Besides, Europeans are very much respected in Bihar, and the place is, moreover, very healthy. What is more, touring in Bihar is very comfortable—one meets with such warm welcome there.



*Lord Curzon.*—Let me then cast Chittagong, Dacca, and Mymensingh on the shoulders of the Chief Commissioner of Assam.

*Lieutenant-Governor.*—[*In raptures*] Wisely said. What a sharp head Your Lordship has. Why else should the Home Government appoint you to rule India at so young an age? But there is one thing to consider. Would Mr. Fuller consent to this? Who is there but fears the Bángál (an East Bengal man)? Displease them but in the least and they will rend the skies with their outcry. And what spirit! They care for no one. Some time ago, a Bángál sued the Dacca Municipality for spending money in doing honour to the Lieutenant-Governor. What audacity!! The Bángáls have long been pestering the Lieutenant-Governors of Bengal. They will be adequately punished if placed under Fuller. The administrative system of Assam will crush them down as do the wheels of the Car of Jagannath. But would you be able to stop Fuller's mouth? [*Aside*] But we are made much of by the Nawab of Dacca when we go there. Let that pass. I cannot now unsay what I have said.

*Lord Curzon.*—You need be under no apprehension on that head. [*Saying this, Lord Curzon takes up paper, and hurriedly writing something on it, orders the orderly to call Mr. Risley.*]

*Enter MR. RISLEY.*

Risley, see that you send me to-day a letter drafted to the address of the Bengal Government in accordance with the instructions laid down on this paper. The following words should be written with reference to the proposal to amalgamate Dacca, Mymensingh, and Chittagong with Assam:—"No temporary opposition in the transferred towns or areas, no artificial agitation or interested outcry should be permitted to divert the efforts of Government from the main object, viz, the erection of Assam into a vigorous and self-contained administration." [*Looking at the Lieutenant-Governor*] What do you say? Nothing but hard words would silence the foul-mouthed Bángáls.

[*Exeunt Lord Curzon and the Lieutenant-Governor.*]

*Risley.*—[*Aside, on his way to office, on reading the paper given by Lord Curzon*] He wants, I see, to put his finger into every pie. He will turn everything topsy-turvy before he goes away. There is now no agitation in Bengal and peace reigns. What need was there of disquieting men's minds by discharging this huge bomb-shell there is more than I can understand.

[*Exit.*]

37. The *Nivedan* [Calcutta] of the 16th December observes that the

The proposed transfer of some East Bengal districts to Assam.

proposed transfer of the Dacca, Mymensingh and Chittagong districts to Assam, if carried out, will be advantageous to all parties. The population of Bengal then will be about  $7\frac{3}{4}$  crores, and that of Assam will be about  $1\frac{3}{4}$  crores. The time seems to have come for the separation of East Bengal from Bengal. East Bengal will be much benefited by the separation. Most probably the administration of Assam will be transferred to Dacca. If a Divisional Bench of the High Court can be established there, it will do useful work in the same way as the Judicial Commissioner of the Central Provinces administers his Province. The Bengalis will then have two Provinces, and their influence will increase.

NIVEDAN,  
Dec. 16th, 1902.

38. In an article headed "A bolt from the blue—Terrible news for Dacca and Mymensingh," the *Sri Sri Vishnu Priya-o-Ananda Bazar Patrika* [Calcutta] of the 16th December writes as follows:—

Proposed reduction of the territorial jurisdiction of the Bengal Lieutenant-Governorship.

SRI SRI VISHNU  
PRIYA-O-  
ANANDA BAZAR  
PATRIKA,  
Dec. 16th, 1902.

"What I had thought of is now moving away further and further, what I had never calculated in my mind is now coming before me. I was to become the Emperor of the World the very next morning, but the self-same person has to proceed to the forest in the guise of an ascetic wearing his matted locks."

The sky is blue and there is not a trace of cloud. But all of a sudden falls the dread thunderbolt of destruction, and a catastrophe as great as the earthquake of Lisbon or an eruption of Vesuvius comes to pass. These sudden Providential visitations have always filled men's minds with wonder, fear and confusion. But it seems to us that the cruel proposal embodied in Mr. Risley's



letter with the approval of the Government of India, is one which will cause greater fear and surprise.

We have, for a long time past, protested against the rumoured transfer of Chittagong to Assam, and a statement made some months ago in the Bengal Council pointing out the baselessness of the rumour had the effect of re-assuring the public mind. But how long can inwardly burning fire remain suppressed, or the injurious action of poisonous microbes remain latent in the human body? The old question of Chittagong was raised again, and just as we were waiting in expectation to hear the true and correct reply to be given in the Bengal Council to this question and indulging the hope that that Council would again re-assure us by declaring the rumour to be false, the next morning's *India Gazette* announced to us in the early and inauspicious hours of that fatal Saturday, that the all-powerful Indian Government, which can make even impossible things possible, had done what nobody had ever dreamt of, or, in other words, that Mr. Risley, Secretary to that Government, had published the proposal to amalgamate Dacca and Mymensingh with Assam.

An intense anxiety has really taken possession of our minds since we read this proposal. We do not know for what great crime committed by the people of those two districts, Government is now resolved upon inflicting upon them this severe punishment. They must now exchange the benefits of their advanced system of administration for the reprehensible and poisonous effects of a backward administration. The well-educated and advanced Bengali must now find himself called an Assamese, after receiving high education such as is given by the highly civilised British Government, and having acquired a high order of culture and mental disposition by moving in advanced society the people of Dacca and Mymensingh are now going to be put in the chains of the Assam administration. They will henceforward cease to be Bengalis and become Assamese. Public opinion, so far as we have been able to ascertain it during the short time that has elapsed since the official announcement was made, makes it clear that the news of the proposed amalgamation has really made the inhabitants of the districts concerned mad, that it has come upon them as a thunderbolt, and that it has caused them agony more intense than that which is produced by the news of a destructive earthquake.

Government says that "all this is mere sentiment. The effects of our proposal, if carried out, will prove beneficial in future—sentiment is perfectly immaterial." But we say that it is sentiment which moves and guides the world and makes men betake themselves to the affairs of the world. It was a saying of Napoleon's that "it is imagination that rules the world." This well-known psychological fact, this general trait of human character, is not unknown to Government. Why nevertheless Government seems prepared to disregard this agonising sorrow of the people on the ground of its being an outcome of mere sentiment is what we do not understand.

We do not understand the purpose and object of Government's actions. What the precise object of the reconstruction of the territorial jurisdiction of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal is we have not been yet able to see. Who can say whether what Mr. Risley states to be the true object of the Government's proposal is really such, or it is one which is merely intended to re-assure the public mind? At this moment it has become necessary for Government to keep its eyes fixed on Persia, Afghanistan, Tibet, the Eastern Frontier of India, and many other countries. It is precisely at this time also that it is dealing with the Official Secrets Act Amendment Bill, the Universities Bill, and similar measures, and that it has given publicity to its proposal to transfer the Chittagong, Dacca, and Mymensingh districts to Assam, the proposal, that is, which has had the effect of bringing upon them all the convulsion of a disastrous and appalling earthquake. Who knows what the object of Government is?

We are unable to see that the increased administrative convenience and advantages which are expected to result from a transfer of Chittagong, Dacca and Mymensingh to Assam, cannot be secured by the adoption of some other measure. We fail to appreciate the gravity of the reasons set forth in Mr. Risley's letter. If the Government of India had but coolly and patiently considered what policy it is which can suggest any attempt to mutilate a highly organised society, and to allow members of a highly-educated community to



be trampled upon by a relatively backward administration, on the plea of facilities of communication by water, or that of natural boundaries as created by rivers, it could never have put forward such an unnecessary and heart-rendering proposal. The language of Dacca and Mymensingh has no connection with that of Assam. The inhabitants of Western Mymensingh and Western Dacca do not understand even the language spoken by the Assamese. There is besides a world of difference, as regards social manners and customs, between the two peoples. We really find no appropriate words in which to protest against the unreasonable and worthless arguments made use of in support of Government's proposal. Government may some day employ a similar line of reasoning, and rule that the word Brahman will mean all those people who will not discuss politics, read English, or raise their heads even if they are kicked, that the word Kayastha will mean only clerks, and so on. It would be no wonder if some such rule were proposed in the ethnologist Mr. Risley's time.

We are aware that arguments are of no avail when our powerful Government disregards, as it has done in the present case, the heart's wish of the people, and declaring that to be necessary which is really unnecessary, embarks upon dreadful measures which are sure to cause them deep pain. The people of this country have now no other course open to them than that of praying for the mercy of the liberal-minded Lord Curzon. A powerful agitation should be at once set on foot all over Bengal for the purpose of making the pathetic cry of sorrow proceeding from hundreds of thousands of Bengalis audible to His Excellency. The proposal, if sanctioned, will prove extremely injurious to the whole of Bengal, while it will make the Port of Calcutta a great loser. The Port Commissioners and the British Indian Association will very probably make a strong protest. It is our belief that the noble-minded Lord Curzon will never support this worthless proposal and thereby cause deep sorrow to hundreds of thousands of people and dislocation of not a few affairs and arrangements, political, social, commercial and industrial.

39. Referring to the proposed transfer of portions of East Bengal to Assam, the *Jyoti* [Chittagong] of the 17th December writes as follows:—

JYOTI,  
Dec. 17th, 1903.

The proposed dismemberment of Bengal. The assurance given by the *Pioneer* newspaper that the newly-constituted province of Assam will have a Lieutenant-Governor of its own had so long kept the Chittagong public silent over the dismemberment question. But we now see that the matter has assumed a grave and serious aspect. Assam will have no Lieutenant-Governor. Besides this, the Chief Commissioner of Assam is afraid of bringing Dacca and Mymensingh under his government, because he thinks that it will be difficult to introduce into those districts the backward system of Assam administration. Again, the revenue of the Dacca and Mymensingh districts is only 17 lakhs against 31½ lakhs of the Chittagong Division. Mr. Fuller is therefore unwilling to take Dacca and Mymensingh, because he fears that the expense of their administration will leave a very small surplus of their revenue for Assam. Lord Curzon is in the habit of making sweeping proposals at first and then cutting them down when he sees them stoutly opposed by the public. In the present case, it is proposed that Dacca and Mymensingh should be transferred to Assam along with Chittagong. The Chittagong people will consequently desist from opposing the proposal, but the inhabitants of Dacca and Mymensingh will raise a fierce agitation against it. We therefore fear that that part of the proposal which concerns them will be given up, and Chittagong alone will in the end be transferred to Assam. From every point of view the question possesses a fearful aspect for the people of Chittagong.

40. The *Sanjivani* [Calcutta] of the 17th December writes as follows under the heading "The misdeeds of Lord Curzon":—

SANJIVANI.  
Dec. 17th, 1903.

The proposed transfer of some East Bengal districts to Assam.

Lord Curzon has done many unpleasant acts, and the Bengalis have borne all that with a heavy heart. But if he actually transfers the Dacca, Mymensingh, Chittagong, Tippera, and Noakhali districts to Assam, they will curse him for ever as their worst enemy. Mr. Risley's letter has alarmed Bengal, and almost maddened the inhabitants of Dacca and Chittagong by filling them with indignation and disgust. The



proposal to transfer Chittagong to Assam was made long ago. The people of Chittagong have been all along strenuously opposing it. But Mr. Risley says that though they at first opposed the transfer, they now seem to have changed their mind and are in favour of it.

That the Government of India is totally ignorant of the real condition of the country is conclusively proved by what Mr. Risley has said. In manners, customs, and language the people of Chittagong are really Bengalis. Some of the best Bengali poems have been written by them. Chittagong is thus in every respect part and parcel of Bengal, yet the Government of India wants to snap this natural tie asunder with brute force and to yoke Chittagong to Assam. It is impossible for the people of Chittagong to submit to this insult in silence, and they have therefore girded up their loins to oppose this odious and unnatural proposal with all their might. So furious an opposition will arise in Chittagong, Noakhali, and Tippera, that Lord Curzon will not be able to forget it till the last moment of his life.

The proposal of the transfer of Chittagong to Assam is not a new one. But the proposal to transfer Dacca and Mymensingh has come upon the public as a terrible surprise. Whoever hears of it is astounded.

It is true that Bengal is a large province, and that its population is eight crores. But may we enquire why should one man be unable to rule it? You may say that the gigantic task made Sir Alexander Mackenzie catch a fatal malady, that it broke down the health of Sir Charles Elliott, and that it killed Sir John Woodburn. But why appoint a man as Lieutenant-Governor at an age when he ought to renounce the world and enter into a hermitage as a devotee? Why place a civilian on the throne of Bengal at 50 or 55, when he has become unfit for service? Without appointing old superannuated civilian as rulers of Bengal, import middle-aged men from England. Then, indeed, all fear of death will vanish. Such a man will not be afraid of a vast province like Bengal.

Appoint a Governor for Bengal, as is done in Bombay and Madras and have Ministers to assist him. All objection will then disappear. If you say that all this will be expensive and it will be difficult to find money enough for the purpose, we say in reply—Do away with your Revenue Board and cut down the pay of the Secretaries, and there will be no want of money.

If Lord Curzon can govern the whole Indian Empire, how is it that one man is unable to govern Bengal? Lord Curzon has been extending the boundaries of India. The entire coast of Arabia, Mekran, Burma, Aden, Oman, Uganda, and Somaliland is part of the Indian Empire, and Tibet also will ere long form part of it. So if in spite of its continually extending limits India can be governed by one man, why should it be impracticable for one man to rule Bengal?

Another argument advanced in favour of the transfer is that with the spread of English education and of newspapers the administration of Bengal has become much more complex than before, requiring great care and caution. We fail to see how the spread of newspapers can add to the difficulty of an administration. On the contrary, newspapers make the government of a country easier by promptly bringing to the notice of the ruler all official irregularities. The Government of India have therefore taken an entirely wrong view of the matter.

Is it the duty of the Lieutenant-Governor to scrutinize all the lanes and obscure corners of Bengal? He is the guiding officer of the administrative machinery. Is he expected to search and examine whether the engine has got its supply of fuel and water? Is he to perform duties which can be very well performed by Judges and Magistrates? His Honour is the helmsman of the barge of administration: should he be employed to tow the vessel? So the argument that he has got too much work to do possesses very little importance.

The municipal administration, it is said, takes up much of the time of His Honour. But this is a self-inflicted woe on the part of Government, inasmuch as it chose to take upon its own shoulders the burden which had been assigned to local bodies by Lord Ripon. The Lieutenant-Governor may be relieved of this burden by making over the management of municipalities to the people.



The statement that the Permanent Settlement makes His Honour's work too heavy for him is really a funny one. But we will not proceed further to-day. The news we have been getting from Dacca, Mymensingh, and Chittagong is not good news for Government. Loud cries of the deepest discontent are in everybody's mouth. Whoever hears of the proposal utters words which we cannot express in writing. East Bengal is not dead. There will be seen waves of an indignant agitation, the sight of which will bewilder the Government of India.

41. The same paper regrets that though there were two such excellent native candidates as Mr. S. N. Datta and Babu Kali Narayan Ray, Manager of the Paikpara Estate, for the Managership of the Tajhat Estate, Rangpur, which Government has brought under the management of the Court of Wards, one Mr. Pope, an old man, has been appointed to the post on a salary of Rs. 500 per month. This gentleman once officiated as Manager of the Khagra Estate in the Purnea district, and is at present without any employment. Has Government acted fairly in overlooking the claims of abler and more experienced Managers under the Court of Wards in favour of a candidate whose advantage over these gentleman is that he is a European? Will not Sir Andrew Fraser take notice of this injustice? If any estate comes under the Court of Wards in Bihar, the Bengalis have no chance there. And even in Bengal proper, we find that the Bengalis are denied their just due. What, then, will the Bengalis do for a living?

SANJIVANI  
Dec. 17th, 1903.

42. Referring to the proposal of dismembering Bengal, the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 18th December writes as follows:—  
The proposed dismemberment of Bengal. We do not question the soundness of some of the arguments used by the Government of India in support of the proposal. The increase of the area and population of Bengal has made the burden of the administration of the province too heavy, and the work of properly supervising every part of it impossible for a single man. On the other hand, the smallness of Assam, in area and population, is the cause of its backwardness. The proposed amalgamation of East Bengal with Assam will give a forward impulse to its commerce, arts, literature, etc. The necessity of the transfer of East Bengal to Assam has also been shown from a geographical point of view. The fear that Chittagong, Dacca, and Mymensingh will suffer by being subjected to an inferior standard of law and administration is said to be groundless, as "there would be no change either in the class of officers employed, or in the administration of the law."

HITAVADI,  
Dec. 18th, 1903.

We cannot be at one with Government on the subject. The loss of Chittagong, Dacca, and Mymensingh will be a serious loss to Bengal. The inhabitants of East Bengal are Bengalis, and their connexion with the Assamese will in many respects be highly disadvantageous to them. Besides this, literature, arts, commerce, etc., will greatly suffer in Bengal in consequence of the proposed transfer. The connexion of the Uriyas with Bengal is rather remote, but the connexion with Bengal of the inhabitants of East Bengal, who are true Bengalis, is very close and based upon natural ties. In this state of things, we do not think it proper and reasonable to transfer East Bengal to Assam. Dacca is the capital of East Bengal, its connexion with the province is historical, and Bengali literature is greatly indebted to the inhabitants of East Bengal. It is in no way desirable to do a great loss to Bengal for promoting the welfare of Assam. The Government of India has invited the opinion of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal on the subject, and we hope that His Honour will strongly oppose the proposed transfer. The public also will certainly raise a fierce agitation over the question.

HITAVADI

43. Referring to the creation of a special cadre in the clerical establishment of the Bengal Secretariat, in which forty appointments of values varying from Rs. 400 to Rs. 60 have been reserved for Eurasians and Europeans, the same paper says that this allotment of forty high posts to *Feringhis* does not appear to be just considered from the point of view of the proportion of *Feringhi* clerks to Bengali clerks in the Secretariat. We are not however, astonished at this, because nowadays Government has been showing

Government's partiality in the Bengal Secretariat.



such partiality to *Feringhis* at every step. It is a matter of deep regret that such an unjust policy should find favour in Lord Curzon's time.

BANGAVASI,  
Dec. 19th, 1903.

The proposed dismemberment of  
Bengal.

44. The *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 19th December, remarks as follows on the proposal to dismember Bengal:—

Government says:—

"A fear has been expressed that the people of Chittagong would suffer by being subjected to an inferior standard of law and administration. There does not appear, however, to be any ground for this apprehension. For it is certain there will be no change either in the class of officers employed or in the administration of law, while all the operations of Government would receive closer supervision from the Chief Commissioner of Assam than they can possibly meet with from the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal."

Reassuring words, no doubt! But if Government will give us the permission, we would ask "Is Assam really and fully well governed as she is?" There are in Assam tea-planters and coolies, both good and bad. There we find the planters frequently complaining against the coolies that they combine among themselves and commit oppression upon them, and the coolies recriminating. Are we to say, under these circumstances, that Assam enjoys the benefit of a strong and well established administration? Accusations like these are every-day occurrences there. Where is the Province that will willingly seek amalgamation with a Province like that? If oppressions and accusations had been rare either on the side of the planters or on that of the coolies, the inhabitants of Chittagong, Mymensingh and Dacca might have felt assured of good government. But are the existing relations between planters and coolies in Assam such as to be reassuring to anybody? The officers may be well meaning. But, as matters stand at present, will they be able to keep a vigilant eye over whole Assam as enlarged by amalgamation? The reassurance about the protection of the High Court is indeed true. But who is there in Bengal that is not frightened by the fierce agitation lately made by the Anglo-Indian community over the High Court's decision in the Bain case? How many people in Bengal would, under the influence of such a fear, willingly seek amalgamation with Assam? How shall the physician heal others who cannot heal himself?

Will Chittagong, Mymensingh and Dacca be, after their amalgamation with Assam, so well off as regards educational advantages as they are now under Bengal by reason of their contact with Calcutta? Assam is still far behind Bengal in that respect.

Government's statement about the heavy burden laid upon the Lieutenant-Governor is true. But it is also true that dismemberment of Bengal will not be desirable if its effect be injurious to a large number of His Majesty's subjects. No task is too heavy for a really capable man, while an incapable man finds even the lightest work much too heavy for him. The Viceroy is able to rule the whole of India. Cannot the Lieutenant-Governor rule even this small Bengal? An incapable man is unable to rule even a single village, nay, even his own household. The proposed change, it is clear, will, if effected, result in great injury to Chittagong, Mymensingh and Dacca, and will do more harm than good. Under these circumstances, if the administration of Bengal be indeed a burden—a greater burden than one man can well bear—let the number and powers of its ruler's assistants be increased, or let provision be made for the presence of the Lieutenant-Governor in Calcutta throughout the year, or let a Deputy Lieutenant-Governor be appointed. But the interests of the people should by no means be injured. Let the heavier burden of expenditure all this will create even crush down the people if it must; still Dacca and Mymensingh must not be amalgamated with Assam so long as they live to protest against it.

BANGAVASI.

45. A correspondent, Babu Indranath Banerji, of the same paper writes as follows on the proposed pilgrim tax in Puri town:—

There should be no objection to a pilgrim tax, as such, if by putting a tax on pilgrims or, in other words, by levying a small amount varying from half-anna to two annas from each pilgrim to Puri, the cost of the improvements to be effected in that town can be met. It would be well if any large scheme could be carried out with the aid of small subscriptions raised from a large number of individuals. Nor would such a tax do violence either to the religious



feelings or the spiritual interests of the pilgrims. But what it is necessary to ascertain in this connection is the amount of money that will be required to be raised and the purpose for which it will be required.

A vigorous protest should, of course, be made if there be any proposal to spend money on unnecessary work, while if the proposed work is one that is admitted to be necessary, funds must be provided for its execution. If money must be raised, it should be seen that the way in which it is raised causes the least hardship to those from whom it is collected. A protest should also be made to the large wasteful expenditure which is, as a rule, incurred along with necessary expenditure. In almost all expenditure incurred by Government, the establishment charges form the heaviest item. The best portion of the proceeds of the road and public works cesses, for instance, goes to meet the cost of establishment, leaving little that can be spent for the benefit of the cess-payers. Native opinion considers this wasteful expenditure, and the proposed pilgrim tax for the improvement of the Puri Town would be open to the same objection if the major portion of its proceeds were found to be dealt with in that way. But it is not proper to raise objections to the proposed tax without knowing everything about it that ought to be known.

It is, therefore, desirable that, before anybody proceeds to write on the subject of the proposed tax, he should keep himself informed on these points, namely, whether the proposed improvements are necessary, whether the cost of such improvements could be met otherwise and in an easier way than by taxing the pilgrims, and if the imposition of a pilgrim tax were the best solution of the question, what arrangements would cause the least hardship and harassment to pilgrims, and secure the exemption from the tax of those who were not such.

46. The *Basumati* [Calcutta] of the 19th December writes:—

The proposed transfer of Dacca and Mymensingh to Assam.

Mr. Risley, as appears from his letter published in the *Gazette of India*, has anticipated all possible objections to the transfer of Dacca, Mymensingh and other districts to Assam, and has given, what he considers to be, the best answers to all of them. So, we are certain that Government will make no modification whatever of its proposal. We had been so long protesting against the transfer of Chittagong to Assam, but we now find that the whole of East Bengal is going to be so transferred. Bengal is justly proud of Dacca and Mymensingh. At one time Dacca was the capital of Bengal. The proposed decapitation of Bengal may increase the importance of Assam, but how can the people of East Bengal call themselves Assamese after the lapse of so many centuries? Mr. Risley says that sentimental objections ought to have no importance in discussing the question. We are very sorry that Mr. Risley, after growing old in this country, has failed to grasp a very plain fact. The Bengalis love their country very dearly and are unable to forget their cherished associations and ideas handed down to them from their forefathers. They would rather die than consent to be called Assamese. Call this "sentiment" if you please, but such sentiments are always good. We believe the whole of Bengal will join in the agitation against the proposal of Government.

BASUMATI,  
Dec. 19th, 1903.

47. The *Dacca Prakas* [Dacca] of the 20th December has the following:—

The proposed dismemberment of Bengal.

We shudder to say that that most ancient land which has, from time immemorial, felt it a glory to be called Bengal and the curtailment of whose boundaries, as laid down in Hindu times, was not deemed to be a right thing even by the Musalman Emperors, is now about to be dismembered under British rule owing to the displeasure of Providence. It is a matter of great regret that the land whose inhabitants have been united by the tie of brotherhood even as jewels strung together, and have been as a model of civilisation even from times when the name of Britain was unknown in the world's history, and when most part of the existing globe wore the form of a forest peopled with wild beasts, thus proclaiming its primitive life, is now about to have that tie of brotherhood sundered from a fear of danger that does not exist, by the model nation of the present day. It makes one laugh and weep at the same time to say that the wisdom of a British Minister is now about to assign a different nationality to a portion of a people who have, from prehistoric times, been reckoned as members of the same family as regards physiognomy,

DACCA PRAKAS.  
Dec. 20th, 1903.



temperament, manners, customs, race, language, and religion. Alas! that it should be so!

The publication of this dreadful news in last Saturday's *Gazette of India* has frightened the inhabitants of Bengal like moths thrown into a fire. Everybody is anxious to know what opinion Sir Andrew Fraser expresses on the matter. We hope that a righteous man like Sir Andrew will shrink from disregarding the views of the general public. If Mr. Risley's proposal be carried into effect, the separated districts will rush towards destruction by reason of contact with a backward race, while the people of Bengal will be weakened by the loss of an integral part. The public are wholly unable to understand why Government is kindling the fire of disquiet in the people's mind by putting its hand to this revolutionary matter.

Let us see whether it is really impossible for one man to perform the duties of the Lieutenant-Governor of Bengal. There does not appear to have been any change worth speaking of in the size of Bengal during the last thirty years. If so large a province could be so long satisfactorily ruled by a single ruler, why should it be otherwise now? The Government of India has acted wisely in not insisting upon the area of the province. The chief argument relied upon by it in advocating a dismemberment is increase of population. Let us now see how far the object of Government can be attained by the proposed dismemberment. It is a law of Providence that population goes on increasing, and it is not probably in the power of even the Government of India to neutralise this law. Mr. Risley now proposes to avoid an imminent administrative difficulty by casting out a fourth part of Bengal. But is it not a problem fit to engage the attention of Government in this connection, namely, what steps will be taken by it when, thirty years hence, population shall have increased at the former rate?

The whole of India can be ruled by a single Governor, but not the small province of Bengal. This statement would have come with better grace from a boy than from a minister.

We have now to see how the Government of India can solve the administrative difficulty without dismembering the province. In complex administrative questions, it is not wise to cut the Gordian knot instead of opening it. The proposed dismemberment will afford only a temporary relief. The people of Bengal would, therefore, have been grateful to Mr. Risley if, instead of resorting to so improper an expedient, he had devised means to adapt the administrative system to the altered circumstances of the province. Every sensible man who sees the Viceroy managing the infinite administrative affairs of the Government of India with the help of an Executive Council must say that Mr. Risley's apprehensions may be quieted for good by the creation of a similar Executive Council in Bengal. Why should Bengal be deprived of the privilege of possessing an Executive Council when Madras and Bombay have it? A solution of the problem on these lines by Mr. Risley would have been truly statesmanlike. Neither in extent of territory nor in population is Bengal inferior to either Bombay or Madras. If Bengal be, then, thought unfit to have an Executive Council, the decision must be pronounced to be not impartial. The creation of an Executive Council will render the administration of Bengal easy, even with such increase of area and population as is in the course of time inevitable. Our worthy contemporaries of the *Englishman* and the *Bengalee* have also recommended the creation of an Executive Council. If the Government of India reject the advice of even such experienced persons, shall we not have reason to apprehend that the object of the dismemberment is not to relieve the overtasked Bengal administration, but that some secret motive or policy lies behind the question? The entire population of Bengal expect of Lord Curzon that the Government of India shall desist from this improper proceeding and strengthen the administrative capacity of the Bengal Government by the creation of an Executive Council.

We have carefully read Mr. Risley's long letter. It is a great wonder that statements so absurd should be made by one holding the responsible position of Home Secretary. The argument that has appeared of sufficient force to the Home Secretary in transferring Uriyas from the jurisdiction of Madras or the Central Provinces to that of Bengal has appeared to him to be of no force whatever in the decision of the question of the separation of Dacca



and Mymensingh from Bengal. While transferring the greatest portion of Chutia Nagpur to the Central Provinces he has advocated the retention of the districts of Hazaribagh, Manbhum, and Singhbhum under Bengal on the ground that they geographically form part of Bengal. But this argument has been entirely lost sight of by him in considering the question of the separation of Dacca and Mymensingh. Does it become a Home Secretary like Mr. Risley to make use of reasoning so absurd?

Mr. Risley's experience of the people of Dacca and Mymensingh will be seen in the following extract from his letter:—

"The two latter districts (viz., Dacca and Mymensingh) will constitute a projection from the main body of Bengal obstruding itself into the heart of Assam, from which they will be separated by no ties either of origin, language, religion or administration."

If Mr. Risley had known anything of the people of Dacca and Mymensingh, he would have seen that the relations between Dacca and Mymensingh on the one hand and Assam on the other are by no means closer than those existing between London and the extreme north of Scotland, and that this proposal to transfer Dacca and Mymensingh to Assam has created the same alarm in their minds as would be created in the mind of a Londoner by a proposal to banish him to the north of Scotland. For want of space, we are unable to review Mr. Risley's long letter this time. Mr. Risley has sown the seeds of dissension in the peaceful abode of Bengal by setting the Vaidya and Kayastha castes at loggerheads with one another. We shall show in another issue that this dismemberment of Bengal is only another chapter in this policy of "divide and rule."

The writer then earnestly exhorts all Bengalis of all ranks, conditions, and ages, and particularly the inhabitants of Dacca and Mymensingh, to reflect upon the ruin and deterioration that await them, and to enter a strong and united protest against the proposed dismemberment of the province. It is a matter for consideration whether Government has the right to convert into a distinct nationality a portion of the Bengali nation that has been so famous from the dawn of history, and every member of which has always been proud of the Bengali name. Let not the people of Chittagong flatter themselves that by changing the name of Bengali for that of Assamese they will gain the favour of the powers that be. What is certain is that by loss of touch with the metropolis and by contact with a backward people they will deteriorate. Let this determination be present in the heart of every Bengali, that as we have been Bengalis from the beginning of creation, so we must remain Bengalis to its end.

We hope that the generous and righteous Sir Andrew Fraser will not reject our just prayer. So far as we are aware, there is not a single soul in Dacca and Mymensingh but is deeply alarmed at this revolutionary proposal. Could the Government of India find no other measure for the good of any part of this vast empire to engage its attention that it must needs waste its time over this absurd scheme of amalgamation?

The article ends with the following appeal to Lord Curzon:—

"Deprive not Bengalis, O Lord, of the Bengali name—is the humble prayer of a crore and a quarter of Bengalis."

48. Referring to the proposed dismemberment of Bengal, the *Rangalay* [Calcutta] of the 20th December writes as follows:—

The proposed dismemberment of Bengal.

We do not understand what the Government of India means by saying that the work of the administration of Bengal is now "too heavy a burden for any one man." A District Magistrate, with the help of the police, rules a district, and a District Judge dispenses justice in it. Four or five such districts constitute a Division, and a Commissioner supervises its working. The powers of Divisional Commissioners were, at first, very large, but they have been curtailed by the Board and the Government, and the burden of work has therefore become heavy for the latter. This state of things has been brought about by the craving for power which high officials nowadays exhibit. Let the powers of the Divisional Commissioners be increased, and, if that does not suffice, let the Revenue Board have two more members. The Civilians will be satisfied by the creation of two new posts for them, and will cease to passionately support the proposal for dismemberment.

RANGALAY,  
Dec. 20th, 1903.



KHULNA HITAIISHI.  
Dec. 21st, 1903.

49. Referring to the proposed transfer, the *Khulna Hitaishi* [Khulna] of the 21st December writes as follows:—

The proposed dismemberment of Bengal.

Under Hindu kings, Dacca was the capital of Bengal. It is also a place of historical fame. The village Rampal, to which the Vaidya king Adisur caused five Brahmins to be brought from Kanauj in order to perform his famous *yajna*, is situated within the Munshiganj subdivision of the Dacca district. Relics of a flourishing town are still seen in the village. Rampal and the surrounding villages, constituting the Vikrampur pargana, are at present well known as places which have given birth to many a high official of the British Government. Vikrampur is also a seat of Sanskrit learning in Bengal. Its loss will therefore be a serious one for Bengal. The country on the other side of the Brahmaputra is looked down upon by the orthodox section of the Hindu society as not having been visited by the Pandavas. The proposed transfer of this country to Assam will therefore amount to an interference in religious matters.

Under the Musalman Kings, Dacca was the capital of Bengal. Its name at that time was Jahangirnagar. That European merchants used to trade with it in those days is evidenced by the fact that there is a Firinghi Bazar in the town. Maharaja Raj Ballabh, with whose help and advice Lord Clive conquered Bengal, was a native of Rajnagar in the Vikrampur pargana. The Raja's palace was washed away by the Padma, and Rajnagar now bears the name of Jajirar Char. The English Government of Bengal has repaid the benefit which it received from the Raja by refusing to make a settlement of the place with the Raja's descendants. Even the pensions, which the latter used to receive from the Government, have recently been stopped.

We know that Government cares very little for our opposition. We deliver ourselves on this subject simply to relieve ourselves of our pent-up feelings.

PRATIVASI,  
Dec. 21st, 1903.

50. Referring to the proposed transfer, the *Prativasi* [Calcutta] of the 21st December writes as follows:—

The proposed dismemberment of Bengal.

We have nothing but entreaty as our armour. But if they do not listen to our entreaty and we are obliged to part for ever with our friend and boon companion, Dacca, we shall, with heavy hearts, bid her our last farewell and come home with rueful faces, sorry for the severance of our political connection with her. The same with Chittagong as with Dacca. But if Assam is made a Bengali-speaking province, we shall have no objection to Chittagong's transfer. Lord Curzon may be compared with Muhammad Tughlak in learning and purity of character; but we fear lest the resemblance between these two great men should extend to the Pathan king's ambition to conquer Persia, China, etc., and the madness which led him to establish his capital first in Delhi, then in Devgiri, and then in Delhi again.

### III.—LEGISLATION.

HITAVADI,  
Dec. 18th, 1903.

51. Referring to the Universities Bill, the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 18th December writes as follows:—

The Universities Bill.

The purpose for which the Universities Commission was appointed will not be served and the defects and deficiencies of the present system of education, for the removal of which the Commission took the evidence of the educationists of the different Provinces, will remain uncorrected and only a complete control of Government over the Universities will be established by legislation. Can this be called educational reform?

It may be that a number of private colleges are not so well managed as they ought to be. But will education be reformed if only this evil is removed? We believe that the manner in which it is proposed to constitute the Senate and the Syndicate and give the latter great powers over colleges, will be productive of more harm than good. It is proposed that college authorities should constitute a part of the Syndicate, but it is extremely doubtful whether the authorities of private colleges, the interests of which are chiefly at stake, will find place thereon. Who can say that *zulm* will not be committed on private colleges under the proposed arrangement?

The decisions of the Senate and Syndicate will, of course, be subject to the approval of the Government, but we do not know how far this Governmental



control will be effectual in practice. The condition of most of the private colleges leads us to fear that the adoption of stringent measures in regard to them will have the effect of closing them for ever. We do not at all think it desirable, however, that these private colleges, in which alone poor students can receive high education, should be abolished in the name of a tinsel reform. Even if, for argument's sake, we take it for granted that the proposed arrangements will be beneficial to most of the colleges, will that be a real reform of education? Will the desired effects be ever secured except by a reform of the present system of teaching and examination? There will be no change in the text-books and subjects of study, the system of examination will remain as it is, and the existing unsatisfactory and inefficient methods of selecting text-books, appointing examiners, etc., will continue to exist and the Universities will continue to turn out asses as before. Is it not a matter of deep regret that this and only this will be the result of the large enquiries, extensive observation, and prolonged discussions of the Universities Commission? What is the necessity of a piece of legislation which, while leaving the imperfections of the present system of education untouched, will make this education too dear for many? As a matter of fact, an arrangement which concerns itself chiefly with the constitution of the University cannot be expected to work out an all-round educational reform. The authorities have more than once been heard to say that the desire of all classes of people to receive high education is the cause of innumerable evils, and that crowds of successful and unsuccessful young men, on meeting with failure in life, sow seeds of discontent in the country. But it is a great regret that the Universities Bill does not propose any remedy for this.

#### VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

52. The *Medini Bandhav* [Midnapore] of the 16th December writes that

MEDINI BANDHAV,  
Dec. 16th, 1903.

A book sold at the Sub-Registry Office of Tamluk.

the book entitled "Bisaybodh," written by Babu Chandranath Ghosh, Subdivisional Officer of Tamluk, is said to be very useful to the public, and so Babu Ram Satya Mukerji, Sub-Registrar, of Tamluk, has undertaken to sell it. He persuades all persons coming to the Sub-Registry Office to have their deeds registered, to purchase each a copy of the book. So the book is commanding a very large sale.

53. The *Mahima* [Calcutta] of the 18th December writes:—

MAHIMA,  
Dec. 18th, 1903.

Lord Amphill on the Hindu religion.

Lately Lord Amphill delivered a speech on the religious faith of the Hindus. His Excellency said that the Hindus have no fixed religious belief, and he believes that they will not find salvation. We do not wish to enter into a religious controversy with him. It may perhaps be pertinently said that the *Brahmajnan*, or knowledge of the Supreme Being, of the Hindu, and the Christian belief in God are widely different. The Christian believes that God created the world in six days and that he rested on the seventh day. But the Hindu, though horribly idolatrous, can never imagine that the power of the Almighty is so limited. The Hindu believes in 33 crores of gods, sees God in creation; he does not know, nor does he believe, that a rigidly defined belief is indispensably necessary for salvation. However, we do not think that Lord Amphill, filling as he does the exalted office of Governor, has acted wisely in giving public utterance to a particular religious belief. The keynote of British administration in India is that the rulers should never express small regard for any religion.

54. A correspondent of the *Hitavadi* [Calcutta] of the 18th December

HITAVADI,  
Dec 18th, 1903.

The surplus of the Birbhum Coronation Fund.

says that the surplus, amounting to Rs. 2,500, of the Birbhum Coronation Fund, has been raised by subscription to Rs. 4,500. With this money the District Magistrate desired to establish a tower clock on the local Town Hall. The local people, however, desire that the money may be devoted to the work of water-supply in such villages in the district as are smitten by water-scarcity.



HITAVADI,  
Dec. 18th, 1903.

55. Referring to the Lord Ampthill's speech on the religious education of Hindu youths, the same paper writes as follows:—

Lord Ampthill on the religious education of Hindu youths. We have no objection to Lord Ampthill's entertaining a profound veneration for his own religion, and we cannot blame him even if he expatiates on its greatness with a hundred tongues. But the circumstances under which, in a Hindu seminary and in the presence of Hindu students and Hindu subjects, he cast aspersions on their religion and expressed his longing for the spread of Christianity, are such as certainly justify us in condemning him a thousand times. We have no wish to hear a foreign ruler discuss the merits and demerits of the Hindu religion, and we cannot maintain our patience when we hear him express a hope for the spread of Christianity to every nation in the world. If Lord Ampthill has really any wish to engage in religious controversy, any strong desire to prove the superiority of Christianity, let him throw up the Governorship of Madras and descend into the arena of polemics and many will come forward as his opponents. But if, instead of doing that, he addresses himself, sceptre in hand, to the task of discussing the religion of his subjects, and seated on his gubernatorial throne, preaches to them the greatness of Christ, we must in the interest of the Sovereign, the subject, and the State alike, say that he is unfit to be a civilised ruler in this country of Hindus and Muhammadans, and that it is his duty to resign without delay an office full of responsibilities like the Governorship of a Presidency.

But why did Lord Ampthill all of a sudden feel called upon to enter into a discussion of the Hindu religion? Has the reputation earned by him under Mr. Chamberlain made him think that he is an expert in all matters? He may be perfectly able to penetrate the mist of crooked politics, and he may have made a name for himself by vanquishing his opponent by means of political hypocrisy. But what qualifications does he possess for discussing the true principles of the Hindu religion? Though young in years he has been placed in a high official position, and that is what has turned his head and made him betray recklessness in a matter which does not fall within his province.

After giving the substance of Lord Ampthill's speech, the writer proceeds to observe as follows:—

Lord Ampthill ardently hopes that the Indian Musalmans will be converted to Christianity, and he believes that in the fulness of time God's mercies will be dispensed even to Hindu unbelievers. That is why we say that his speech is not unlikely to alarm both Hindus and Musalmans. How can a reckless young man like Lord Ampthill understand the true meaning of the Hindu religion? It is certainly a proof of gross ignorance to ascribe "belief in no God" to that religion which lays down for different classes of human society different forms of worship and devotion based on diversities of mental constitution and on the varying capacities of worshippers, which, while permitting the worshippers to make mental images of numberless gods and goddesses as aids to contemplation, has yet succeeded, by means of the Vedanta philosophy, in implanting the fundamental principles of monotheism in the heart of even the commonest peasant, and prescribed the three paths (knowledge, action, and *bhakti*) for meeting the requirements of a devotee according as he is advanced or behindhand, and the catholic and liberal nature of which is proved by weighty maxims like "The whole world is Brahma", "Like rivers, which, following in some cases a straight course and in some others a meandering one, ultimately fall into the sea without exception, the devotion of different worshippers, however different the forms it assumes, reaches the same Almighty God," and many others.

There are various religious sects among the Hindus, but that is no reason why an intelligent man should arrive at a conclusion unfavourable to them on that account. Are there no diverse sects among Christians? The members of these sects are all Christians, and yet they practise their religion in different forms. Has Lord Ampthill noted this fact? Is it not amusing to find that people, whose God repents, laughs, performs physical exercises, fears men and shows his back, do not hesitate to ridicule the gods and goddesses of others? Is it not amusing to see people whose Scriptures contain stories



in which serpents are found talking, asses are found to obtain a sight of angels, and swine are found possessed by the devil, pointing out defects in the sacred books of other nations? The Governor of Madras will shortly officiate as Viceroy, and we have been pained to see him engaged in such religious discussions. If he had been a *padre* preacher, people could have given him a reply more extensive than his speech. But while prevented by his high official position from saying anything by way of protest, they will find their feeling wounded. This is not certainly creditable to English administrative policy. We hope Lord Ampthill will consider the matter and retract his statements.

56. The *Bangavasi* [Calcutta] of the 19th December has the following:—

Lord Ampthill on the religious education of Hindu youths.

In his speech on the religious education of Hindu youths Lord Ampthill observed:—"You must dig deeper to find the causes of those evils [the irreligious tendencies of the rising generation of Hindus] which all thoughtful Hindus are now recognising, for unless you find the true cause and the very root of the evil you will not be able to extirpate it." This is perfectly true, but the indistinct intimation of his sincere belief, which in ascertaining that cause the Governor of Madras has given in the course of his short address is extremely erroneous. It is his belief that the Hindu religion is old and imperfect, and consequently unsuitable to the present age; and that is why there is now such violent disturbance in the religious belief of the Hindus. It is here that, wittingly or unwittingly, His Excellency has made the greatest mistake. But such mistake on his part need cause no surprise. All Europeans who have from the days of the famous French traveller Bernier up to the present time attempted to discover the true meaning of the Hindu religion have without one exception met with failure. And the cause of that failure is European civilisation with its essentially objective tendency. The tendency of that civilisation is on the side of action and enjoyment, and it is being ever attracted towards man's gross, material nature. That is why that civilisation is extremely antagonistic to his spiritual and religious sense with its essentially subjective tendency. The charming beauty of a spiritual religion is not reflected in the mirror of a heart nurtured by this civilisation and dimmed by desire. This is the cause of the impatience and disregard of all regulation and restraint which is visible in modern Europe, and also the reason why every stratum of European society is enveloped in the dire gloom of unrest and uneasiness. Lord Ampthill would like to see the whole world converted to Christianity. But does he not see the degradation to which that religion is being subjected at the present time even in his own country? He would have seen his error if he had only noted the proportion of Englishmen who conform to the practices of their religion in London, that favourite abode of English civilisation, with its teeming millions. It was computed by Horace Mann in 1851 that in that year the number of church-going people in that city was only 28 per cent. of its total population. As stated by Mr. Robertson, the number stood at 23 in 1886, and according to Mr. Mackenzie, it stands at 18 at the present time. The number of sincere worshippers apart, which it is impossible to estimate, even externally speaking and as far as appearances go, such has been the decrease during these few years. If means had been available, we could have seen how many, even among this small number of church-goers go there to show the beauty of their dress, how many to find an opportunity for a talk with their beloved ones, and how many to capture loving hearts by their sweet voice. We do not say there are no really pious men there, but it is undeniable that, thanks to the terrors of modern civilisation, the religious instinct is undergoing contraction even in that country.

57. The same paper writes:—

The Budh-Gaya question.

We do not know upon what evidence, historical or other, Dhammapal of Ceylon claims to take the Budh-Gaya temple into the possession of the Buddhists. We learn from history that the founder of the temple was not a Buddhist, but a Brahman of the Saiva sect, and that it was dedicated to the god Mahesvara. General Cunningham says that the Saka king, Haviksa, who was a Hindu, founded the temple in B.C. 120 or 160. Most probably he simply paid the money for the erection of the temple, and it was constructed under the superintendence of

BANGAVASI,  
Dec. 19th, 1903

BANGAVASI



a Brahman. The only Buddhist connection with it was that it passed for some time under Buddhist management when the religion of Buddha made triumphant progress in India. It is inconceivable, nay, impossible that the British Government, which has all along upheld the rights of the Hindu Mahant, should now think of depriving him of the ownership of the Budh-Gaya temple. The claims of Dhammapal will certainly not find favour with Government, inasmuch as the question involves the religious faith of millions of Hindus by whom Budh-Gaya is regarded as a sacred place.

BANGAYASI,  
Dec. 19th 1903.

58. The same paper says:—

The Lieutenant-Governor's  
speech at Dacca.

Our present Lieutenant-Governor is the pious son of a pious father. He is very sweet in speech.

He told the Dacca people that he had come not to hold out any hopes to them, but to know their wants. We quite agree with His Honour. How can he supply our wants without first knowing what they are?

#### URIYA PAPERS.

UTKALDIPKA.  
Dec. 12th, 1903.

59. The *Utkaldipika* [Cuttack] of the 12th December observes that some of the provisions of the Indian Official Secrets Bill.

Secrets Bill are very unjust, and if they are not properly considered by Government, great injustice and oppression will result.

UTKALDIPKA.

60. Adverting to the proposal for a pilgrim tax at Puri, the same paper observes that the rich among the pilgrims who

Puri pilgrim tax.

spend much in several ways may not feel it difficult to pay a few annas as poll tax if they are obliged to do so, but the poor pilgrims, whose number is large, will surely feel it. The oppression will not altogether disappear even if the poor among the pilgrims are exempted from the payment of the tax. Sufficient money is realised from the pilgrims under the Lodging-house Act. What necessity is there then for a poll tax? A tax was before being levied from the Puri pilgrims at Atharanalla ghat, but as it was considered an interference with religious deeds, which is contrary to the benign policy of Government, the tax was abolished. The Lodging-house Act was then not in force. Whatever the Government may think, the people will take it as an interference with their religion, and for this reason only the Government ought not to enforce such a scheme.

UTKALDIPKA.

61. The same paper says that the health of the town of Cuttack was good during the week.

Public health.

URIYA AND NAVA-  
SAMVAD,  
Dec. 9th, 1903.

Assessment of municipal tax by  
the Chairman of the Balasore  
Municipality.

62. The *Uriya and Navasamvad* [Balasore] of the 9th December praises Mr. Egerton, Chairman of the Balasore Municipality, for making a just and equitable assessment of the municipal tax.

URIYA AND NAVA-  
SAMVAD.

63. Referring to the opening of an industrial Exhibition with the ensuing meeting of the National Congress at Madras, the

Industrial exhibition at Madras.

same paper says that it is better to pay more attention to the Industry and commerce of the country than to deal with political matters so vigorously.

URIYA AND  
NAVASAMVAD.

64. The same paper gives an account of the fraudulent manner in which some *arkatis* (recruiters) enticed away some *chasas*

Oppression by the *arkatis*.

(7 men, 6 women, and 5 children) from their home

at Itamati in the Nayagurh Tributary State and took them to Assam. In the train they came to know of their future calamity from some other people of their country, and while at Howrah, on their intending to escape, were oppressed by the *arkatis*, but were saved by the interference of some school-boys, who collected money and sent them back to their homes. The writer observes that it is a matter of disgrace that in the British Administration the crafty *arkatis* are in this fraudulent manner enticing away men from their homes and sending them to Assam. Government is unable to put a stop to such a practice. The evil cannot be remedied unless the people help in the matter.

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,

Bengali Translator.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,

The 26th December, 1903.



